

Message Text

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SUBJ: REPUBLICAN PEOPLES PARTY VICTORY IN LOCAL ELECTION

VIEWED AS TEST OF PARTY'S NATIONAL STRENGTH

SUMMARY: VICTORY OF REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP)
CANDIDATE OVER RIVAL SUPPORTED BY SO-CALLED "NATIONALIST FRONT"
IN MARCH 16 MAYORAL ELECTIONS IN MARMARA TOWN OF KARTAL IS
SEEN HERE AS POSITIVE TEST RPP'S PROSPECTS IN NATIONAL ELECTIONS.
POLITICAL OBSERVERS PREDICT ECEVIT WILL BE ASKED FORM
MINORITY GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY

1. IN MARCH 16 MAYORAL ELECTIONS MARMARA TOWN OF KARTAL
RPP CANDIDATE MEHMET ALI BUKLU CAPTURED APPROXIMATELY 62
PER CENT OF VOTE IN CONTRAST TO 37 PER CENT WON BY JUSTICE PARTY
(JP) CANDIDATE SELAMI OGUZ. REMAINDER OF VOTE DIVIDED AMONG
TURKISH UNITY PARTY (TUP), TURKISH SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY
(TSWP) AND INDEPENDENTS. SPECIAL ELECTION WAS HELD AFTER PREVIOUS
MAYOR, AN INDEPENDENT ELECTED IN DEC. 1973, DISAPPEARED. HE IS
CURRENTLY LISTED AS "MISSING PERSON".

2. FOR SEVERAL WEEKS PRIOR ELECTION, RIGHT-WING "NATIONALIST
FRONT" PARTIES, ESPECIALLY JP, NATIONAL SALVATION (NSP) AND
NATIONAL ACTION PARTIES (NAP) HAD PUBLICIZED EVENT AS OPPORTUNITY
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DEMONSTRATE SOLIDARITY OF RIGHT. IN RESPONSE, RPP CONDUCTED

ENERGETIC CAMPAIGN IN WHICH PARTY'S ISTANBUL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, AND LOCAL PARTY CHIEF PLAYED ACTIVE ROLES. RPP ALSO SUCCEEDED IN GETTING ENDORSEMENT FROM REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION DISK - VALUABLE ASSET IN PRIMARILY WORKING-CLASS TOWN. TO STRESS IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY RPP TO ELECTION, PARTY'S GENERAL SECRETARY ORHAN EYUBOGLU, FORMER MINISTERS OF TOURISM AND HOUSING ORHAN BIRGIT AND ALI TOPUZ, ATTENDED TO OBSERVE VOTING.

COMMENT: PROMINENT RPP FIGURES HERE ELATED OVER KARTAL RESULTS WHICH IS FIRST ELECTORAL TEST SINCE RPP-NSP COALITION COLLAPSED.

THEY VIEW IT AS EVIDENCE THAT POPULARITY ECEVIT AND PARTY HAVE REMAINED HIGH. WHILE WORKING CLASS DISTRICT OF KARTAL CERTAINLY NOT TYPICAL, OUTCOME IS VIEWED AS SIGNIFICANT SINCE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, WHICH HAS REFUSED TO JOIN NATIONALIST FRONT, OPENLY SUPPORTED JP CANDIDATE IN THIS ELECTION. CLOSE FRIEND AND CLASSMATE OF ECEVIT TOLD DPO RESULTS WILL STRENGTHEN PARTY'S DETERMINATION PUSH FOR EARLY ELECTION. HE EXPECTS PRES.KORUTURK TO ASK ECEVIT FORM MINORITY GOVERNMENT WHICH, UPON FAILING RECEIVE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE, WOULD STAY ON IN CARETAKER CAPACITY. THIS WOULD PRESUMABLY INCREASE PRESSURE ON RIGHT-WING PARTIES, PARTICULARLY DP, TO AGREE TO EARLY ELECTIONS. SOMEWHAT SURPRISINGLY, SEVERAL PRO-JP BUSINESSMEN AGREE WITH PREDICTION THAT KORUTURK WILL NOW OPT FOR ECEVIT MINORITY GOVERNMENT. THEIR VIEW BASED ON CONVICTION THAT PRESIDENT AND MILITARY LEADERS ARE ADAMANT IN THEIR OPPOSITION TO DEMIREL-LED NATIONALIST FRONT, WHEREAS ECEVIT CARETAKER GOVERNMENT WOULD AT LEAST AMELIORATE WHAT THEY VIEW AS GROWING MILITARY IMPATIENCE FOR A SOLUTION.

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